

Information and Technology Track

E-Business Comes to Environmental Protection: Using Technology to Streamline Regulatory Procedures Workshop

Using Electronic Commerce to Build Upon a Strong Integrated Database

In 1993, Pennsylvania began work on its vision of an integrated data system. The need became even more critical when executive staff could not answer Department wide compliance questions. The public's demand to know inventory and compliance information added fuel to the fire.

Phase I saw the introduction of the Client/Site Application module in 1995. All environmental programs could use this module. Build into the Application Process are the Department's Money Back Guarantee, standard letter notifications and creation of the client/site information.

Phase II built upon this foundation to create the Inventory and Compliance/Enforcement modules. All programs can utilize the Compliance and Enforcement module developed from 1996 to 1999. Now comprehensive compliance reports can be made which reflect true total state wide activities. These reports are available to the public as well as to Department staff.

While Phase II Inventories only included a core group of programs, other environmental programs are being brought aboard to add their inventory details. The Air Quality, Storage Tanks, Land Recycling, Pollution Prevention and Compliance Assistance, Dams and Encroachments and Safe Drinking Water programs are all actively developing inventory requirements.

As part of the Electronic Commerce initiative, three projects were selected by DEP Executive staff for projects in 1999: Electronic Permitting, Electronic Fee Collection and Electronic Reporting.

Electronic Permitting for the Oil and Gas Well Program. This permit can be applied for on line after pre-registration with the Department. Upon submittal, with attachments, the application will be processed through the Application Processing module. Oil and Gas applications require varying fees, depending upon well type.

Electronic Fee Collection is an integral part of application processing. Fees will be accepted and processed through either an ACH (Automated Clearing House) debit or credit card transaction.

Electronic Reporting which will involve the NPDES Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR). On line web forms utilizing the "thin client" approach will allow facilities to input their required DMR data. Use of **PKI** technology to insure non refutability will protect both DEP and the public's interests. **XML** (eXtensible Markup Language) will be used to transmit DMR data from the facility's in house data system to DEP. Once the data is resident at DEP, and in an XML format, DMR data will be made available for retrieval by other agencies, most notably, EPA.

Some of the other eCOMM projects in development are eFACTS GeoSpatial, GIF (General Information Form), Mobile platform for sample submission and compliance activities, and Document Archiving.

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